



# AETC News Clips

## Randolph AFB, Texas



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### Hutchison offers a salute to S.A. leaders

Web Posted: 08/27/2005 12:00 AM CDT

**Rebeca Rodriguez**  
**Express-News Political Writer**

Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison lauded San Antonio leaders Friday while taking a jab at federal officials who chose to close key Texas military installations.

"I think (the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission) made a mistake, the Department of Defense made a mistake in closing every naval port in the Gulf of Mexico. I think that's wrong," Hutchison said at a gathering of the Bexar County Republican Women at the Club at Sonterra.

In addition to hurting local communities, the closures leave Texas and the United States vulnerable, she said.

"We have a proximity to Central America and South America, and half the chemical ports are in Houston. It would be a terrorist target and I think we need a defense there," said Hutchison, who is running for re-election in 2006.

The latest round of BRAC has been hailed as a boon for San Antonio, which will enjoy a net gain of about 4,000 jobs, many in the field of medical research.

"The San Antonio community deserves the great news because it is a military city," she said.

But other cities around the state are feeling the pinch, including Corpus Christi, which will lose about 6,000 jobs with the closure of Ingleside Naval Station and Wichita Falls, which will lose about 2,100 jobs with the transfer of dental services from Sheppard AFB.

Sheppard is also facing the transfer of FA-35 Joint Strike Fighter support to Eglin AFB in Florida.

Hutchison said she would lobby to have pilot training for the JSF program return to Sheppard in the future.

"After Eglin gets filled up with Joint Strike Fighters, the Air Force has already said they're going to be looking for another field, and I think that field is Sheppard," she said.

Hutchison added that she didn't expect communities to have

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to deal with more realignments and closures any time soon.

"I do not see another round of BRAC. This was the only one authorized," she said.

The state's losses provided Barbara Ann Radnofsky, expected to be Hutchison's Democratic opponent next year, with an opportunity to hammer the senator on her record.

"Texas as a whole didn't benefit from her seniority," Radnofsky said. "I think this is going to be one of the major issues in this race."

Radnofsky, a Houston attorney and partner with the law firm of Vinson & Elkins, is making her first bid for office.

She noted that Hutchison, who was elected in 1993, was in office when the last BRAC round, 10 years ago, pummeled San Antonio and surrounding communities with the closing of Kelly AFB.

"I believe it was on her watch that many thousands of jobs were lost at Kelly" in 1995, she said.

But local leaders stood behind Hutchison on Friday, calling her a strong leader in the fight to protect Texas' military installations.

"No one has done more to protect Texas military installations than Sen. Hutchison," said Congressman Lamar Smith, R-San Antonio. "We're all the happy beneficiaries of her good work in Washington."

Joe Krier, head of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, said the senator was "unstoppable, indefatigable, tireless and could not have done more."

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### **BRAC gives S.A. a healthy dose of medicine**

Web Posted: 08/28/2005 12:12 AM CDT

**Sig Christenson**  
**Express-News Military Writer**

After years of fearing the wrath of another base-closure round, Texans awoke to judgment day in dizzying stages of denial and disbelief — that they either survived the ordeal with their jobs and lives intact or must start over in a new town.

San Antonians know both states of mind a decade after Kelly AFB's closure and the loss of 10,000 jobs. But they were practically giddy a day after the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, commonly called BRAC, concluded its work, because the city emerged as one of the state's biggest beneficiaries.

"This is really big for a lot of reasons," said retired Air Force Brig. Gen. John G. Jernigan, who heads the task force that devised the city's base-closure strategy. "I try to keep reminding people that now that it is codified, the Department of Defense has recognized that San Antonio is the center of gravity for military medicine."

A military that has historically fueled some of the city's best-paying jobs and the rise of its Hispanic middle class from the earliest days of aviation through two world wars is poised to spark substantial high-tech growth in the post-BRAC era.

Medicine, research and technology, pillars of the city's economy along with tourism and the military, are especially affected by the closure commission's decisions. They stand to grow, as does higher education and military construction, which will boom into the next decade.

Private companies that specialize in military research and development and their workers will benefit, but so, too, will area governments in search of new tax dollars, the city's higher education structure and the average man and woman on the street.

Dr. Francisco Cigarroa, president of the University of Texas Health Science Center, said four military-civilian residency programs there could expand into pediatrics and family practice.

Soon enough, he said, San Antonio may rival Houston as a medical research hub.

"As the military presence grows, and as the health science center grows in the next several years — working in collaboration with regard to clinical care, education and research — collectively the amount of health care and bioscience that will be occurring in San Antonio I believe will equal what is occurring at the Texas Medical Center," he said. "I believe this is a remarkable opportunity for San Antonio."

To be sure, obstacles remain in BRAC's wake. San Antonio lost Brooks City-Base and Wilford Hall Medical Center, which runs one of the city's three Level 1 trauma facilities.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service is moving, and its 335 workers will go to Denver, Indianapolis and Columbus, Ohio, or remain here in other federal jobs.

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With Brooks went the School of Aerospace Medicine and 417 jobs, the Institute of Occupational Health's 342 workers and the Human Effectiveness Directorate. Its famed centrifuge, used to train space shuttle astronaut John Glenn in 1988, will be moved to his home state, Ohio.

Bexar County Judge Nelson Wolff and Mayor Phil Hardberger, who meet each week, are devising a plan to minimize the potential loss of top-dollar researchers at Brooks' School of Aerospace Medicine. It's widely believed many of them would stay here rather than move to Wright-Patterson AFB in Ohio, if given the chance.

Jernigan, a former Brooks commander, doubts that even a third of the base's 150 scientists will leave.

"I don't think we're going to be hurt badly at all," he said. "In fact, in the aggregate I think we'll come out of this stronger."

The problem is finding a place for them in San Antonio, but Wolff is in the embryonic stages of mapping out a health science center program that would focus on aerospace medicine. He's thinking of tapping into a \$200 million statewide technology fund to help start the project.

### Win for medical care

Perhaps the biggest legacy of this year's BRAC is the expansion of medical care in San Antonio. Although Wilford Hall will become a clinic under the Pentagon plan, Jernigan noted it would perform a variety of outpatient surgical procedures.

A new building will go up to replace the hospital, which opened in 1957, and much of Wilford Hall's 59th Medical Wing will move to the Army's Brooke Army Medical Center.

BAMC will get much bigger, adding 3,500 jobs and \$800 million in new construction, Fort Sam Houston spokesman Phil Reidinger said. It will expand its Level 1 trauma center to accommodate the 100 patients now seen each month at Wilford Hall's emergency room and will continue to serve war veterans being treated for burns, lost limbs and gunshot wounds.

Fort Sam, the city's fifth-largest government employer, will add 9,228 employees to its 26,289-strong work force. It also will build new barracks, offices, labs and recreation facilities.

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Wolff and others dismissed concerns that the 4,995 students coming to Fort Sam's Defense Department Center for Joint Enlisted Training are a bad trade for the loss of Brooks' 3,549 military, civilian and contract workers. The typical Fort Sam student will make no more than \$1,612.80 a month; many Brooks' civilian researchers earn more than \$85,000 a year.

One expert close to the process warned against taking a two-dimensional view of the 2005 closure round's impact on San Antonio. He said the city would see an influx of people with doctorates in engineering as the Army Environmental Center leaves Aberdeen, Md.

Others share his belief that a shift toward military medicine and technology will create jobs, spin-off companies and an expansion of education — in part by the spouses of Fort Sam students on extended stays here. It's too early, however, to know how many secondary industries will come to San Antonio.

"I don't think it's a bad deal. A bad deal is when we lose a base like we did 10 years ago," Wolff said. "But I am concerned about the brain drain, and that is why I am exploring some ways to keep these people here."

The fifth BRAC since 1988 was billed as the Pentagon's chance to fine-tune the most powerful military on Earth, but it did so with a twist. BRAC 2005 focused more on shifting missions to create joint operations than it did on closing bases. The commission voted on 2,513 closure recommendations, most of them realignments. It ordered 23 installations closed, two in Texas.

Ingleside Naval Station was ordered to shutter within six years, the time frame outlined by the law establishing this closure round.

El Paso and San Antonio were the state's biggest gainers, receiving 20,228 new jobs, while realignments dinged cities from Abilene and Corpus Christi to Wichita Falls and Killeen.

Texarkana dodged the biggest bullet when the commission voted to take Red River Army Depot off the closure list, sparing 2,500 jobs. But Texarkana lost Lone Star Ammunition Plant and 425 employees.

"We are alive," said a jubilant Jerry Sparks, chairman of Texarkana's BRAC task force.

In Ingleside, people are "kind of in disbelief," said former Mayor Willie Vaden, who plans to write a letter to President Bush asking him to reconsider the commission's 5-2 decision. "It really hasn't sunk in hard and fast."

### **Collaboration potential**

San Antonio, which accounted for more than a third of the 174 recommendations impacting the state, did its best to shape the BRAC battlefield. It fought to protect its biggest gain, Fort Sam's joint enlisted training center, while saving Lackland AFB's Cryptologic Systems Group and the Air Force's directed energy laboratory — both of which were to be realigned to new bases.

Jernigan's task force succeeded, but it wasn't just the 1,000-plus highly educated personnel employed by directed energy and the cryptologic group that drove the effort. Several local companies work with the Air Force, Navy and Marines at the directed energy lab, where research has produced the active-denial

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system — a crowd-control device that uses microwaves to create a burning sensation but poses no long-term harm.

"That is a real growth area, and if you're not there on site marketing and working with them, then you can be left out of the picture as they make changes," said Bob Sanchez, the former head of a board that helped craft the Brooks City-Base concept.

"It's the wave of the future," Jernigan said.

The possibilities of directed energy have drawn strong Pentagon interest. One company, Conceptual MindWorks Inc., has 15 people on the project, all of them with at least bachelor's degrees. The company's founder, president and CEO, Elaine Mendoza, said such systems are certain "to create more and more opportunities" for private-public partnerships.

The Pentagon's attempt to move the cryptologic group and its 800 workers was opposed by the National Security Agency, which is bringing 1,500 people to town, because it would hamper intelligence operations. The group brings together people with security clearances and professional expertise but, just as important, draws a large cadre of contractors, Jernigan said.

Health care for San Antonians in and out of the military, meanwhile, will improve. Nine of every 10 patients undergoing minor surgical procedures will be in and out of Wilford Hall's clinic the same day, Jernigan predicted. Most people will notice no real change in the quality of their health care, he said, and BAMC may well be a partner in new research ventures.

Beyond the jobs gained, lost and saved, UTHSC's Cigarroa said BRAC brings with it the potential for collaborative projects similar to one in which the health science center and University Hospital recently joined a national study of PolyHeme, a blood substitute. Patients flown to BAMC would receive PolyHeme, which is designed to keep trauma victims from bleeding to death before arrival.

"There's going to be more individuals, more employed people coming to San Antonio," Cigarroa said. "I also think that the collaborative opportunities that exist now between the military and the civilian sector are going to lead to new discoveries, new intellectual property, potentially new biotechnology companies coming, perhaps new drug development coming as a result, and I don't think you can put a number on that."

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### Carlos Guerra: Getting and losing military bases are a big part of Texas history

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San Antonio Express-News

If thousands of Texans became obsessed with the BRAC process, it is because history gave so many communities a stake in it.

Texas has reaped economic benefits from the military since the mid-1800s. In January 1846, after Mexico refused to sell northern California to the United States, or accept the Rio Grande as the southern border of Texas — which Mexico still claimed — President James Polk ordered Gen. Zachary Taylor to march from Corpus Christi to the Rio Grande.

Mexico viewed this as an invasion. When the resulting Mexican American War ended four years later, the United States had seized almost half of Mexico's territory, facilitating the United States' westward expansion and necessitating the construction of much of Texas' military's infrastructure.

It was needed to secure the new territories, control the Mexican and Indian populations, and control the border itself. But Texas' size, its long border and its proximity to Mexico's northern cities gave our state the lion's share of the new military installations.

More than 30 U.S. Army forts and many smaller garrisons were built in Texas between 1849 and 1861. Some, like Fort Brown in Brownsville and Fort McIntosh in Laredo, were built to secure the new border. But others, initially built along a line from Fort Worth to Corpus Christi to "control" the Indians, were moved west as their soldiers succeeded in their mission.

By the mid 1850s, one-fourth of the entire U.S. Army was stationed in Texas, but when the Civil War broke out, the Army inexplicably left Texas without a fight.

It returned as the war was ending, retook its established facilities and built some new ones, but this time to enforce Reconstruction.

But from the beginning, the pacification strategy was to establish a formidable military presence locally, and also to employ local civilians. As time passed, the former function diminished and the latter increased. Between 1910 and the

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mid-1920s, however, the turmoil of the Mexican Revolution spilled north as Anglo settlers were flocking to Texas from the north, so the Army's presence — and payroll — increased again.

As Mexican hostilities started to die down, the United States declared war on Germany in 1917, and Texas' congressional delegation was poised to land several large training camps for the state.

One, in San Antonio, is where the Signal Corps started experimenting with the military potential of aircraft, which had already been tested in the U.S. Army's unsuccessful invasion of Mexico to capture Pancho Villa. At Fort Sam, military aviation was born, and by the 1940s, Texas' reliable prevailing winds — and its congressional delegation — succeeded in landing more than 50 air bases and fields, where thousands of pilots were trained.

Along the way, Texas' concentrations of military bases also created the need for others necessary to support or service their many needs.

But time has changed warfare, and this has greatly altered the military's needs, leaving Texas with a rich legacy of former forts, airfields and bases.

Brooks AFB — which outgrew its military usefulness — and Naval Station Ingleside, a congressional creation that never fulfilled its intended purposes (read: pork), will soon be added to that list.

But like the old forts and bases that today are industrial parks, schools, businesses, and one, a prison, they too will be more productive in the private sector.

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### **S.A. comes out on top after BRAC**

Web Posted: 08/27/2005 12:00 AM CDT

**Gary Martin**  
**Express-News Washington Bureau**

ARLINGTON, Va. — San Antonio emerged a winner as an independent base-closing commission on Friday wrapped up three days of deliberations that produced mixed results for other Texas military installations.

On the final day, the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission voted to realign missions at Lackland AFB and Randolph AFB in San Antonio, resulting in the loss of 500 jobs.

But the panel rejected a Pentagon proposal to close Ellsworth AFB in South Dakota and consolidate its B-1 bombers with those at Dyess AFB in Abilene, a decision that allowed the Texas base to keep a fleet of cargo aircraft that local officials feared would be sent elsewhere.

Drama surrounding those decisions underscored the Lone Star State's week, during which the panel endorsed San Antonio as a regional medical hub and saved an Army installation in Texarkana, but voted to close or realign six other major state facilities, including Ingleside Naval Station.

The panel also voted to end the Air Force's presence at Brooks City-Base.

Laughlin AFB near Del Rio will gain fixed-wing pilot training and introduction to fighter fundamentals for pilots and weapons systems officers from Georgia. The panel also approved transferring introduction to fighter fundamentals for weapons systems officers to Sheppard AFB near Wichita Falls.

"Texas had some great wins and some great losses," Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison said.

The commission, commonly referred to as BRAC, dealt with some of the most contentious issues on the final day, including a Pentagon plan to overhaul Air National Guard units in 30 states, a scheme that faces federal legal challenges in Pennsylvania, Illinois and Tennessee.

Ellington Field in Houston saw its F-16 jets and the 147th Fighter Wing ordered retired by 2007, and the panel deviated from the Pentagon proposal and took six of the 24 jets away from the 149th Fighter Wing at Kelly Field at Lackland AFB.

It also bucked a Pentagon plan to close Cannon AFB in Clovis, N.M., deciding to parcel out aircraft and personnel over four years to cushion the impact on the local economy.

The vote to spare Ellsworth kept a fleet of B-1 bombers in South Dakota and left a fleet of C-130 aircraft at Dyess instead of moving the planes.

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Abilene was caught by surprise earlier this year by the Pentagon's proposal to move the B-1 fleet to Dyess.

Fearing the base could be left without either mission, the community rallied behind the C-130 wing.

"It's a victory," said Celia Davis, a Abilene military task force member.

The Pentagon released in May a "hit list" of 62 major bases targeted for closure or realignment, estimating the proposals would save the military \$48.8 billion over 20 years.

The BRAC commission went along with most of the recommendations, but voted to keep several key installations, including the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Maine, a submarine base in Connecticut, Red River Army Depot in Texas and Ellsworth in South Dakota.

The base closure panel has until Sept. 8 to send a final list to the president, who has signaled he'll accept it.

Congress can reject the final roster, a measure it has declined to do in four previous rounds that began in 1988.

The commission voted early Friday to back the Pentagon proposal to move an Air Force munitions unit from Lackland to McConnell AFB in Kansas and convert the mission to the Air National Guard for a net savings of \$32 million.

About 96 civilian and military jobs would be transferred from Texas to Kansas with the Standard Air Munitions Package and the Standard Tank Rack Adaptor and Pylon Package.

The Air Force cited the potential risk of moving munitions from the Medina Annex to aircraft at Lackland as a reason for the proposal.

"It does get rid of a risk, that weapons are being transported over San Antonio roads," said retired Brig. Gen. John Jernigan with the San Antonio Military Missions Task Force.

The base closure panel also reversed a Pentagon proposal that would have moved a recruiting office and its 410 civilian jobs from Denver to Randolph AFB.

San Antonio is expected to gain about 4,000 military and civilian jobs under the proposals approved by the panel.

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"There are so many construction projects that are going to be happening on Fort Sam Houston over the next five years that the city's going to get used to cranes everywhere," Jernigan said.

"We've got challenges," said Lyle Larson, a Bexar County commissioner and a member of the military task force. "But clearly, we are a big winner here."

Larson said that compared with other cities, "we did very well."

A day earlier, the BRAC commission voted, as expected, to close the Air Force portion of Brooks City-Base.

As part of that decision, a laser and directed-energy laboratory that employs 275 people will remain in San Antonio.

It also realigned missions based at Lackland, but allowed a Cryptologic Systems Group, which maintains and operates classified communications devices, to remain at the base.

The action spared 800 jobs and a function critical to San Antonio's position in the cyber security field.

Wilford Hall Medical Center was ordered closed at Lackland and would be replaced by a smaller hospital under the realignment.

Trauma and specialized medical disciplines at Wilford Hall would transfer to Brooke Army Medical Center, which the Pentagon wants to transform into one of two regional mega-medical centers.

Fort Sam Houston is expected to grow by 9,000 under base-closure proposals that would consolidate medical care and training at the historic Army base.

That includes 2,100 dental and medical positions at Sheppard AFB in Wichita Falls, which also is losing 500 jobs to Eglin AFB in Florida as part of a streamlining of the Joint Strike Fighter program.

Earlier this week, the nine-member panel voted to keep open Red River Army Depot, which repairs Humvees and Bradley fighting vehicles.

But the commission voted to close Ingleside and realign Corpus Christi Naval Air Station, moving mine-warfare units to fleets in the Atlantic and Pacific.

It also agreed to close the Lone Star Ammunition Plant in Texarkana, where grenades, mortars and other ordnance are kept and maintained.

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# AETC News Clips

## AFIT Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio



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### ***Commission spares AFIT, moves jobs to Wright-Pat***

By Jessica Wehrman , Timothy R. Gaffney  
Dayton Daily News

**ARLINGTON, Va.** | The Air Force Institute of Technology will stay at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, and the base will gain almost 1,000 new jobs under recommendations approved Thursday morning by the independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

It has yet to take up other issues that could cost the Dayton region thousands of jobs, including relocating the Development and Fielding Systems Group at Wright-Patterson, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service station in Kettering and the Ohio Air National Guard's F-16 fighter training mission in Springfield.

The panel unanimously supported a proposal to create a unifying board that will oversee curriculum at the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif.

Both schools will remain in their current locations, and the move will not cost either region jobs, commissioners said.

The board, which will be based in the Washington, D.C., region and will have equal representation from AFIT and the Naval Postgraduate School, will have the power to eliminate curriculum duplication, enhance cooperative agreements between the schools and eliminate excess capacity. Commission members said it aimed to formalize a 2002 agreement between the two schools to share resources and eliminate duplicative courses.

"This is a key victory for maintaining the teaching and resources of AFIT in the Dayton area," said John P. Nauseef, president and chief executive of the Dayton Development Coalition.

AFIT employs about 500 and has about 1,000 students.

The initial Defense Department base closure recommendations did not include the schools, but the commission on July 19 decided to study whether to consolidate or privatize the postgraduate schools, along with the Defense Language Institute in Monterey. The Defense Language Institute was not included in the final recommendation.

"We're taking two great graduate schools and allowing them to kind of get the synergies of being great and share their expertise and hopefully avoid some duplication," said Commissioner Samuel Skinner, who was one of two commissioners to visit AFIT this summer.

U.S. Sen. Mike DeWine said the AFIT decision was good news.

"The Commission recognized the importance of the tailored education being delivered, coupled with the unique resources at Wright-Pat, and I'm happy to see that AFIT will continue its mission in Ohio," he said Thursday.

U.S. Rep. David Hobson, R-Springfield, said the board should be able to deal fairly with AFIT as long as its members are made fully aware of what the facility does.

"When we get people out to AFIT and see what it does, they completely change their minds," Hobson said. "It's not just another school. It's not just another university. There are unique things that can only be done at AFIT."

The commission also approved a recommendation to close Brooks City-Base in San Antonio and move to Wright-Patterson three of its medical functions, including the Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine and a centrifuge facility for high acceleration training and research. A centrifuge facility at Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico will be mothballed and a physiological training unit there move to Wright-Patterson.

The original Defense Department recommendation was to move five functions to Wright-Patterson, but Commissioner Sue Ellen Turner introduced an amendment to send two of the functions — the Naval Health Research Center Electro-Magnetic Energy Detachment and the Human Effectiveness Directorate — to Fort Sam Houston, Texas. There, those missions could continue to work with an Army mission that also worked on directed energy research.

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James Leftwich, vice president of Aerospace, Defense and Technology with the Dayton Development Coalition, said Turner's amendment meant 100 fewer jobs than anticipated would move to Wright-Patterson, but said the region would still gain about 900 jobs. "Wright-Patterson will still be the center for Aerospace Medical Research and Education," he said.

The votes will be considered preliminary until the commission concludes its work later this week.

Staff writer Jim Bebbington contributed to this story.

Find this article at: <http://www.daytondailynews.com/localnews/content/localnews/daily/ddn0825bracweb.html>

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### ***Base-closing panel decides to shut Walter Reed***

Fox News

WASHINGTON — The federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission has recommended to close the world-renowned Walter Reed Army Medical Center outside Washington, D.C. as part of the Pentagon's plan to restructure military bases across the country.

If the plan is approved, the hospital would move most staff and services to the National Naval Medical Center in nearby Bethesda, Md., to create an expanded facility and streamline medical services. The new center will be renamed "Walter Reed."

Other staff members may be moved to a community center at Fort Belvoir in Northern Virginia. The decision could affect 1,300 people who work at the venerable Walter Reed facility, which has treated presidents, senators and foreign leaders as well as soldiers and veterans.

"Kids coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan, all of them in harm's way, deserve to come back to 21st-century medical care," commission Chairman Anthony Principi said Thursday. "But the hospital is old; it needs to be modernized."

One-time costs, including construction and renovations, would total \$989 million. The Pentagon would save \$301 million over 20 years by consolidating operations at the naval hospital, the commissioners said. The expanded facility would be renamed Walter Reed. The current hospital has about 185 beds, but the expanded facility would have 340.

After four months of studying the Pentagon's proposal, the BRAC also on Thursday began debate on the Air Force's plans, arguably the most contentious debates for the group.

Principi said he expected to finish voting no later than Friday, a day earlier than planned. The commission must send its final report to President Bush by Sept. 8.

The president can accept it as a whole, reject it or send it back to the commission for revisions. Congress also will have a chance to veto the plan in its entirety but it has not taken that step in four previous rounds of base closings. If ultimately approved, the changes would occur over the next six years.

In other decisions Thursday, the commission voted to keep open two key Monterey, Calif., military facilities — the Defense Language Institute and the Naval Postgraduate School.

It also approved the establishment of a governing board to coordinate education programs between the Naval Postgraduate School and a military school in Ohio, the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright Patterson Air Force Base.

The BRAC also approved shutting Brooks City-Base in San Antonio, Texas, but decided to keep some of its work in Texas.

Research that was to move out of state under the Pentagon's recommendation will instead go to Fort Sam Houston, also in San Antonio. Other portions of Brooks' work also will move to Lackland and Randolph Air Force bases in San Antonio.

The city-owned technology park with the Air Force as its dominant tenant has about 1,100 military, 1,300 civilian jobs and 800 contractors. Brooks is home to the School of Aerospace Medicine, which has played a key role in the manned space program. Tang, the orange drink created for astronauts, was developed at Brooks in the 1960s.

The panel also sided with the Pentagon in deciding to shift more than 20,000 military and civilian defense jobs from leased office space in northern Virginia suburbs of Washington near the Pentagon to military bases further away from the capital city. Opponents fear such a massive job shift could create traffic nightmares. But the Pentagon says military bases will provide a more secure setting, given threats of terrorism following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

But Virginia lawmakers were fuming.

"These decisions are short sighted, to say the least, and fail to take into account the real world effect of these actions," said Rep. Tom Davis, R-Va. "By moving activities away from Northern Virginia,

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the Defense Department will lose countless highly skilled, difficult-to-replace employees who will choose to seek other employment rather than uproot their families and move out of the area. It will take years, if not decades, to recover from these ill-conceived proposals."

### Ellsworth's Fate Unknown

Much of the Air Force plan includes recommendations to shake up the Air National Guard. It also proposes closing both Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota and Cannon Air Force Base in New Mexico.

"We're doing some very large muscle movements," Gen. Gary Heckman, a top Air Force official who helped lead the service's base-closing analysis team, said in an interview.

He said his service branch wasn't hit in previous rounds of closures as hard as the Army and Navy because overhauling the Air Force's structure — which is what has been proposed this time around — is very difficult.

Ellsworth's proposed closing has caused the most political consternation because freshman Sen. John Thune had argued during the 2004 campaign that he — rather his Democratic opponent, then-Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle — would be in a better position to save the facility. Nonetheless, it showed up on the Pentagon's closure list.

The entire South Dakota congressional delegation — Thune, Democratic Sen. Tim Johnson and Rep. Stephanie Herseth, a Democrat — attended the hearing, as did Democratic Gov. Bill Richardson of New Mexico.

"We need Ellsworth because of the important work people do there," Thune told FOX News on Thursday, noting that the military's B1 bombers are made there.

"The B1 bomber has been the weapon, the weapon of choice ... and it will be prominent in our national security needs for some time going forward."

Thune said the cost savings of closing Ellsworth are minimal compared to the risk of closing it. "We think that presents an inherent security risk as well as some operational deficiencies ... [the difference in savings] really ends up being quite negligible," Thune said.

The senator said he would continue campaigning to keep the base open in an effort to win over the majority of the commission. He noted that the administration has stressed it will stay out of the process and let the military take the lead.

"We've made the decision that we're going to win this on the merit. ... We think there is tremendous military value for Ellsworth going forward and we think we can persuade five of the nine commissioners to take Ellsworth off the list," Thune said.

By far, the most controversy — both on the commission and off — has surrounded the Air Force. Most of its proposals cover the Air National Guard and would shift people, equipment and aircraft around at 54 or more sites where Guard units are stationed.

Aircraft would be taken from 25 Air National Guard units. Instead of flying missions, those units would get other missions such as expeditionary combat support roles. They also would retain their state missions of aiding governors during civil disturbances and natural disasters.

Several states have sued to stop the shake-up, the commission itself has voiced concern that the plan would compromise homeland security, and the Justice Department was brought in to settle arguments over whether the Pentagon could relocate Air National Guard units without a governor's consent. The ruling said it could.

The Pentagon says as a package, the Air Force proposals represent an effort to reshape the service branch into a more effective fighting force by consolidating weapons systems and personnel, given that it will have a smaller but smarter aircraft fleet in the future.

Overall, the Pentagon has proposed closing or consolidating a record 62 major military bases and 775 smaller installations to save \$48.8 billion over 20 years, streamline the services and reposition the Armed Forces.

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Since the Pentagon announced its proposal in May, commissioners had voiced concerns about several parts of it, including the estimate of how much money would be saved.

The commission on Wednesday voted to keep open several major Army and Navy bases that military planners want to shut down, including the Portsmouth shipyard in Kittery, Maine, and the New London submarine base in Groton, Conn., two of the Navy's oldest.

"They have proved they are not a rubber stamp," said David Berteau, a Pentagon official who oversaw base closings for the Pentagon in 1991 and 1993. "But we don't know yet what the common theme is because they're dealing with each of these on a case-by-case basis."

**Find this article at:** <http://khon.com/khon/print.cfm?sid=1151&storyID=6689>

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### **BRAC Commissioners Continue Final Deliberations**

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Aug. 25, 2005 – The Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission began its second day of final deliberations today by approving the Defense Department's recommendation to close Walter Reed Army Medical Center here.

Under the plan, if approved, most of the hospital's staff and services will move to the new Walter Reed National Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., current site of the National Naval Medical Center, and the rest, to Fort Belvoir, Va.

The nine-member panel also reversed its July 19 decision to add the Defense Language Institute and Naval Postgraduate School, in Monterey, Calif., to the Pentagon's list of bases it hopes to close. Today, the commission members voted to keep both installations open.

As part of that decision, the commission voted to establish a new governing board to coordinate education programs between the Naval Postgraduate School and the Air Force Institute of Technology, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

The BRAC commission also voted today to close Brooks City-Base in San Antonio but decided to keep a joint directed energy mission in Texas.

The commission was expected to begin voting on Air Force recommendations later today.

The commission began its final days of deliberations Aug. 24 in Arlington, Va., to vote on DoD's proposal to reshape the military infrastructure and eliminate excess capacity by closing 33 major bases and realigning 29 others.

Initially, plans called for four days of votes, but BRAC commission Chairman Anthony Principi said he hopes to wrap up the session a day early, on Aug. 26.

"We appreciate the important role of the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission in the process at hand," said Michael Wynne, deputy undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics, following the first day of voting.

"As we noted when the department submitted its recommendations in May, previous BRAC commissions have recommended adjustments to the department's submission, and we expected that this independent commission may do the same," Wynne said in a statement. "We will begin to carefully review the commission's recommendations and will have no comment on specific commission actions this week."

During Aug. 24 deliberations, the BRAC commission voted to close:

- Fort Monmouth, N.J.;
- Fort Gillem, Ga.;
- Fort McPherson, Ga.;
- Fort Monroe, Va.;
- U.S. Army Garrison, Selfridge, Mich.;
- Almost 400 Army Reserve and Army National Guard facilities, creating joint centers;
- Naval Station Pascagoula, Miss.;
- Naval Air Station Atlanta, Ga.;
- Naval Station Ingleside, Texas; and
- Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas.

The panel voted to keep open: Submarine Base New London, Conn.; Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Maine; and Hawthorne Army Depot, Nev.

The panel also voted to:

- Wait six months before deciding whether to close Oceana Naval Air Station, Va., giving local and state authorities time to make proposed changes to limit residential encroachment on the base;
- Realign rather than close Red River Army Depot, Texas;
- Keep the Night Vision Lab at Fort Belvoir, Va., instead of moving it to Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.; and

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- Order a study of the practicality of converting a chemical weapons incinerator to incinerate conventional munitions before deciding whether to close Deseret Chemical Depot, Utah.

After wrapping up its deliberations, the panel will send its final report to President Bush by Sept.

8. The president, if he concurs, will send the final list to Congress, which can accept or reject it in its entirety, but not change it.

This week's deliberations follow months of hearings around the country regarding DoD's plan, which defense officials say will save some \$49 billion over the next 20 years.

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